

Amendments to the Claims:

Please amend claims 1 to 15 as set forth hereinafter, please cancel claim 16 and add new claims 17 to 20.

Listing of Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF) variant, ~~characterized in that~~ comprising an amino acid sequence, wherein said sequence is the amino acid sequence of the native vascular endothelial growth factor in which at least one amino acid in the ~~sequence of the native vascular endothelial growth factor~~ at positions 109 to 112 of the native vascular endothelial growth factor is replaced by another amino acid or ~~a deletion is~~ deleted.
2. (Currently Amended) The VEGF variant according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said at least one amino acid in the sequence of the native vascular endothelial growth factor at positions 109 to 112 is replaced by proline.
3. (Currently Amended) The VEGF variant according to claim 2, ~~characterized in that, besides proline,~~ wherein at least one further amino acid at one of the positions 109 to 112 is replaced or is ~~a deletion~~ deleted.
4. (Currently Amended) The VEGF variant according to claim 1, ~~characterized in~~

~~that the~~ wherein an alanine at AA position 111 of the native vascular endothelial growth factor is replaced by proline.

5. (Currently Amended) The VEGF variant according to claim 4, ~~characterized in that the~~ wherein an arginine at AA position 110 of the native vascular endothelial growth factor is replaced by another amino acid.
6. (Currently Amended) The VEGF variant according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that the~~ wherein an arginine at AA position 110 of the native vascular endothelial growth factor is replaced by proline.
7. (Currently Amended) The VEGF variant according to claim 6, ~~characterized in that the~~ wherein an alanine at AA position 111 of the native vascular endothelial growth factor is replaced by another amino acid.
8. (Currently Amended) The VEGF variant according to ~~claims 4 to 7,~~ claim 5, wherein said other amino acid is a proline ~~arginine at AA position 110 of the native vascular endothelial growth factor and the alanine at AA position 111 of the native vascular endothelial growth factor are replaced by proline.~~
9. (Currently Amended) The VEGF variant according to ~~any of claims 1 to 8,~~ claim 1, wherein the VEGF variant is in the form of any of the splice variants VEGF₁₂₁, VEGF₁₄₅, VEGF₁₆₅, VEGF₁₈₃, VEGF₁₈₉ or VEGF₂₀₆.
10. (Currently Amended) The VEGF₁₆₅ variant according to ~~any of claims 1 to 8,~~ claim 9, wherein the VEGF₁₆₅ variant ~~characterized in that it~~ has one of the amino acid sequences

Seq. ID No. 1:

Ala Pro Met Ala Glu Gly Gly Gly Gln Asn His His Glu Val Val
Lys Phe Met Asp Val Tyr Gln Arg Ser Tyr Cys His Pro Ile Glu
Thr Leu Val Asp Ile Phe Gln Glu Tyr Pro Asp Glu Ile Glu Tyr
Ile Phe Lys Pro Ser Cys Val Pro Leu Met Arg Cys Gly Gly Cys
Cys Asn Asp Glu Gly Leu Glu Cys Val Pro Thr Glu Glu Ser Asn
Ile Thr Met Gln Ile Met Arg Ile Lys Pro His Gln Gly Gln His
Ile Gly Glu Met Ser Phe Leu Gln His Asn Lys Cys Glu Cys Arg
Pro Lys Lys Asp Arg Pro Arg Gln Glu Asn Pro Cys Gly Pro Cys
Ser Glu Arg Arg Lys His Leu Phe Val Gln Asp Pro Gln Thr Cys
Lys Cys Ser Cys Lys Asn Thr Asp Ser Arg Cys Lys Ala Arg Gln
Leu Glu Leu Asn Glu Arg Thr Cys Arg Cys Asp Lys Pro Arg Arg

or Seq. ID No. 2:

Ala Pro Met Ala Glu Gly Gly Gly Gln Asn His His Glu Val Val
Lys Phe Met Asp Val Tyr Gln Arg Ser Tyr Cys His Pro Ile Glu
Thr Leu Val Asp Ile Phe Gln Glu Tyr Pro Asp Glu Ile Glu Tyr
Ile Phe Lys Pro Ser Cys Val Pro Leu Met Arg Cys Gly Gly Cys
Cys Asn Asp Glu Gly Leu Glu Cys Val Pro Thr Glu Glu Ser Asn
Ile Thr Met Gln Ile Met Arg Ile Lys Pro His Gln Gly Gln His
Ile Gly Glu Met Ser Phe Leu Gln His Asn Lys Cys Glu Cys Arg
Pro Lys Lys Asp Lys Pro Arg Gln Glu Asn Pro Cys Gly Pro Cys
Ser Glu Arg Arg Lys His Leu Phe Val Gln Asp Pro Gln Thr Cys
Lys Cys Ser Cys Lys Asn Thr Asp Ser Arg Cys Lys Ala Arg Gln
Leu Glu Leu Asn Glu Arg Thr Cys Arg Cys Asp Lys Pro Arg Arg

11. (Currently Amended) The VEGF variant according to ~~any of claims 1 to 8,~~

~~characterized in that~~ to claim 1, wherein the amino acid chain is modified or derivatized and/or comprises mutations, insertions and/or deletions and/or ~~in that~~ it has a signal sequence.

12. (Currently Amended) The VEGF variant according to claim 11, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the signal sequence is connected N-terminally to the amino acid chain of the VEGF variant and has the sequence of Seq. ID No. 3:

Met Asn Phe Leu Ser Trp Ser Val His Trp Ser Leu Ala Leu
Leu Leu Tyr Leu His His Ala Lys Trp Ser Gln Ala.

13. (Currently Amended) ~~Nucleic acids coding for~~ A nucleic acid encoding the VEGF variant of claim 1 ~~variants according to any of claims 1 to 12.~~
14. (Currently Amended) Vectors comprising nucleic acids according to claim 13 for the expression of said VEGF variant ~~variants according to any of claims 1 to 12.~~
15. (Currently Amended) A medicament comprising VEGF variants according to claim 1 ~~any of claims 1 to 12, nucleic acids according to claim 13 or vectors according to claim 14.~~
16. (Cancelled)
17. (New) A method for treating chronic wounds comprising administering to a patient in need thereof an effective amount of the VEGF variant of claim 1.
18. (New) A method for treating a condition induced by a vascular lesion comprising administering to a patient in need thereof an effective amount of the VEGF

variant of claim 1, wherein said condition is chronic venous insufficiency (CVI), primary/secondary lymphoedema, arterial occlusive disease, a metabolic disorder, a chronic inflammatory disorder, a perforating dermatosis, a haematological primary disorder, sickle-cell anaemia and polycythemia vera, or a tumor.

19. (New) The method of claim 18, wherein said metabolic disorder is diabetes mellitus, gout or decubitus ulcer, said chronic inflammatory disorder is pyoderma gangrenosum or vasculitis, said perforating dermatosis is diabetic necrobiosis lipoidica or granuloma annulare, said haematological primary disorder is a coagulation defect and said tumor is a primary cutaneous tumor or an ulcerative metastasis.
20. (New) A method for inhibiting plasmin, inducing neoangiogenesis, and/or inhibiting matrix degradation comprising administering to a patient in need thereof an effective amount of the VEGF variant of claim 1.